

# What Holiness Is

by Aaron Hills

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*The Pentecostal experience is a spiritual blessing that cleanses the heart and makes one holy, acceptable unto God, and enables them to live a victorious and fruitful Christian life.*

**Scripture:** Romans 6:6, 1 Corinthians 3:1, Ephesians 5:26, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Hebrews 12:1

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

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## Description

Aaron Hills delves into the significance of the Pentecostal experience in the New Testament, emphasizing the cleansing and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in believers' hearts. The sermon explores the inherited depravity from Adam, referred to as 'the old man,' 'the body of sin,' and 'the carnal mind,' highlighting the need for sanctification even after regeneration. Hills discusses the dual nature of humanity, the ongoing battle against sin, and the importance of seeking the Pentecostal blessing for victory and joy in the Christian life.

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## Transcript

We have seen in the foregoing discussion how very much is said about this Pentecostal experience in the New Testament. The verb "sanctify" is used twenty times, and the noun "sanctification" ten times; and such words as "holy," "perfect," "righteousness," "perfection" and "holiness," many times each. Moreover, such words and phrases as "cleanse," "cleanseth from all unrighteousness," "cleanseth from all sin," "purity your hearts," "purifieth himself," "a pure heart," "without blemish," "with reproach," "purge," "complete," "sinneth not" -- such words, phrases, and kindred phrases move through the New Testament like a flock of blackbirds through the August sky. And the blessing indicated by all these scriptures is connected unmistakably with Pentecost. It was the baptism with the Holy Ghost that cleansed the hearts of the disciples, "sanctified," "pure," "holy," "perfect," What, now, do these words mean? What is the Pentecostal blessing?

The Bible teaches us that through race-connection every member of the human race has inherited a depraved and fallen nature from Adam. Universal human experience proves it sadly true.

That depravity is called in Scripture "the old man," "the body of sin," "sin that dwelleth in me," "the law of sin," "the body of this death," "the carnal mind," the "root of bitterness," "the sin that doth so easily beset us," and "the law of sin and death." If for the word "law" we substitute its synonym "a uniform tendency," and read "a uniform tendency to sin and death," we have it exactly. It is a PROPENSITY TO EVIL in the heart that is "ENMITY AGAINST GOD."

The above list of terms is horribly suggestive; but the thing named in the heart is more horrible still.

Both the Bible and theology alike teach us another thing, viz., this "carnal mind," this proneness to sin, is not removed in regeneration. This explains why Jesus prayed that His regenerated disciples might be sanctified; and why the apostles invariably urged the Pentecostal experience upon Christian believers, but never urged sinners to seek it. It is a blessing to which only the regenerated child of God is eligible. Hear the theologians on this point.

Frederick W. Robertson, the great preacher of Brighton, England, said in a sermon: "Two sides of our mysterious twofold being here. Something in us near to hell; something strangely near to God. Half diabolical, half divine; half demon, half God. In our best estate and in our purest moments, there is a something of the devil in us, which, if it could be known, could make men shrink from us. The germs of the worst crimes are in us all."

The elder Dr. Stephen Tyng said to his communicants: "Be watchful. Your Christian course is to be maintained in the midst of temptations. Though truly a child of God, you will still carry with you a heart far from sanctified, a remaining sinfulness of nature in the appetites and propensities which demands increasing vigilance. You cannot afford to relax your vigilance over the outgoings of your own sinful nature."

Wesley said: "That believers are delivered from the guilt and power of sin we allow; that they are delivered from the being of sin we deny."

In other words, all Christians, though converted, regenerated, are still "carnal," precisely as the Corinthians were, and as the early disciples were, until they have their Pentecost.

While this tendency to sin, this troublesome "old man," remains in the Christian's heart, the tendencies to backsliding will always be multiplied and strong; to fall will be comparatively easy. The Christian life will be robbed of much of its victory and joy. Its fruitfulness will be lessened and its growth dwarfed, and the Savior's delight in us will be greatly abridged, as those in whom His grace has not been permitted to do its perfect work.

Now it is the appointed work of the Holy Spirit to sanctify the heart, to cleanse the being from this indwell when we plead for the Spirit, will perform His priestly office, and baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.

This incoming of the divine energy will consume carnality, "cleanse" the being, "purify the heart," "crucify the old man," "saved from all cleanness," "purge away the dross," "like a refiner's fire." No evil propensity will be left, like a traitor in the citadel of the soul, to betray it to Satan in some evil hour. Then, "the peace of God that passeth all understanding" will mean something; for there will be no longer any civil war within our hearts. Bull Run defeats and Gettysburg struggles will be a thing of the past; for there will be no more a law in our members warring against the law of our mind. The flesh will Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we may not do the things that we would. The flesh will be "done away" by the Holy Spirit, who crucified it, and a heavenly peace will reign in the soul. The unruly appetites and fierce passions will all become normal and sweetly obedient to the law of Christ. Body, soul, and spirit will be sanctified through and through, and the whole being will say "Amen" to the blessed will of God.

This is what is meant by "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." All unrighteousness of being, everything improper and abnormal in nature, tending to

sin and provocative is cleansed away by the Pentecostal baptism; and the child, once so cursed by sins and carnality, becomes "holy, acceptable unto God."

It is not difficult to find reasons why God wants this Holy Spirit cleansing wrought within us. He hates sin and every trace of the work of Satan within our souls. He loves, like any parent, to have us reproduce His perfect likeness, and reflect to the moral universe His glory. He wants us to be at our best and clothed with power for service, and this we never can be while sin dwelleth in us. He loves to show to onlooking angels what Jesus can do in saving sinners with an uttermost salvation. It is to the praise of His glory who "loved the church, and gave himself for it; he might sanctify and cleanse it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle . . . but that it should be holy and without blemish."

There remains a little space briefly to indicate the conditions on which this Pentecostal baptism may be received.

1. It must be sought of God in importuning prayer. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" But no lazy praying ever got this blessing.

2. There must be a complete surrender of the will to God in absolute obedience. We read in Acts 5:32 that God gives the Holy Spirit "to them that obey him." It means hearty, whole-souled obedience to the slightest whisper of the Holy Spirit. It means to surrender whatever the conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, condemns; to consent to be, to do, to say, to have, to want, or to go as God directs, without hesitation and without complaint.

I am willing

To receive what Thou givest,

To lack what Thou withholdest,

To relinquish what Thou takest,

To suffer what Thou inflictest,

To be what Thou requirest,

To do what Thou commandest.

Amen.

3. Present your bodies a living sacrifice to God, in complete consecration. "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Pass yourselves over into God's hands to own you completely and forever, your body to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and kept pure for His service; your mind to think for God; your heart to love Him supremely; your lips to talk for Him; your time to be spent and your possessions to be used in His service.

4. When one has consciously gone so far in seeking this blessing, it is not difficult to obtain the prize. He has reached believing is received by faith. We are "sanctified by faith." The heart is cleansed by faith. As Jesus is received by faith for pardon, so the Spirit is received faith for cleansing and empowering. The Holy Spirit will come in Pentecostal power when the obedient, consecrated, praying soul believes for the

blessing.

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